**IMPLEMENTING A STANDARDS ALIGNED SYSTEM**

Directions: Using the Focus Guide for a Standards Aligned System with the goal of Student Achievement and the 10 guiding questions from SAS to assess strong, observable evidence of each of the 6 elements, as a beginning administrator, discuss the following:

**How would you use a Standards Aligned System to support Curriculum, Assessment, and Instruction?**

As a beginning administrator, I would first conduct a curriculum audit to find out exactly what is being taught and the consistency among teachers both in a building and the district. This may be done in depth through a curriculum mapping process or another type of informal audit. After reviewing and evaluating curriculum, seeing every child achieve would remain the common vision or goal of the building or district.

Raising excitement, conducting professional development and ongoing learning communities in the area of Standards Aligned System will be a major focus. Curriculum is the framework or plan that encompasses standards, assessments, content and instruction. As a building or district the plan would consist of working in teams to ensure the curriculum is developed to include the above framework. Teachers would be pointed to the SAS section in EdHub. Big ideas, concepts, competencies, essential questions, and vocabulary would be explored. In addition, exemplars from around the state would provide model samples.

Instruction provides teachers with the framework to effectively teach what students should know and be able to do. SAS will provide many resources to enhance instructional strategies aligned with the standards that will assist in student achievement for all students. Moreover, allowing teachers to network and find engaging instruction will support students in developing 21st century skills.

Assessment demonstrates what students know and are able to do. Making teachers aware of the assessment section in SAS will help educate both new and veteran teachers. Teachers will be able to distinguish between summative, formative, diagnostic and benchmark assessment. In addition making use of the links in SAS will inform them of the school improvement tools. Based on SAS, I would initiate an assessment plan. As a team, decide how teachers will know that learning is taking place. In addition, include examples of evidence in the plan and decide what works best. And last, what will be done if the student isn’t learning. As an instructional leader, a principal must be able to motive the teachers and provide the necessary elements so they have the right tools to help every child achieve.

**How would you use a Standards Aligned System to provide professional development?**

SAS entails 6 areas Clear Standards, Fair Assessments, Curriculum Framework, Instruction, Materials and Resources and Interventions. As an administrator I would devote one or two in-service days to the overall concept of SAS. Teachers would have an introduction to the each of the 6 elements in the wheel and then they would be given time to explore while in their job alike groups.

Our theme, “Student Achievement: There is no option for failure” would be announced to staff, students and families. Each week during announcements a comment or tip revolving around this theme would be shared. Moreover, students would see the theme displayed in classrooms as a constant reminder.

To further explore and begin using SAS, all 10 guiding questions related to the Standards Aligned System would be incorporated into the monthly department meetings. Each monthly meeting would focus on one of the guiding questions with two being covered the month of January. Each team or department will create an action plan describing how the team will meet the Evidence of Alignment and action steps to develop or improve. In addition, teachers will be responsible to keep a self-reflection journal. It is not enough to change classroom practice alone, ongoing learning communities are necessary to open up collaboration and get all parties involved.

**How would you use a Standards Aligned System to promote an ongoing learning community?**

An instructional leader must model ongoing learning. An administrator takes part in learning communities such as PIL or PTLA. It is up to the administrator to create ample time for teachers to meet periodically to share action plans and reflections. Topics may consist of learning/instruction, joint lesson planning, problem solving, subject-alike planning, critique student work and lesson study to include peer observations. All of the areas will be explored while using the resources under the 6 elements of SAS. Teachers will be encouraged to join a ListServ in their field of study. Today’s technology allows for collaboration and ongoing learning. A Moodle site or wiki could be created so that the teams could share resources and participate in posted discussions using asynchronous learning. It takes many groups to participate in helping every child achieve. Family should be at the top of the list. Open house can be a time for parents to be introduced to the theme and ongoing learning community resources such as SAS and Thinkfinity’s parent section. A newsletter can be sent home and posted on the school web page with tips on how to help your child achieve. The principal and teachers, sending messages again revolving around our achievement theme, can create Podcasts.

**How would you use a Standard Aligned System to help ALL students to meet and when possible, exceed the state’s standards?**

The Standard Aligned System would be used to help ALL students meet and/or exceed the state’s standards. Using the “Getting Results-Gen 5” document as a guide, I would focus on 4 phases. After identifying a school improvement team, the first phase to tackle is organize and review data. Utilize PSSA, PVAAS, 4-Sight and Benchmark assessment data to evaluate and develop plans to help all students achieve. Second, analyze data and discover what needs to be accomplished. Discover the root cause and use the 10 guiding questions revolving around SAS. Several worksheets from the “Getting Results-Gen 5” document will be utilized to drill down and analyze areas of importance. Third, plan a solution to help all students. Using the worksheets provided the team sets goals and creates an action plan to enhance school improvement. With all of the available data and resources through SAS such as Best Evidence and What Works Encyclopedia, all parties involved will benefit. Lastly, implementing the plan will allow the school improvement team and administrators to revisit and monitor the progress. Just like an action plan, it is an ongoing document.

The ultimate goal is to ensure that all students achieve. Narrowing the achievement gap between student groups while also improving each group’s performance will help obtain the ultimate theme I would like to promote as an administrator, Student Achievement: There is no option for failure.

References

Pennsylvania Department of Education. Summer 2008. *“Getting Results!”* Retrieved from <http://www.portal.state.pa.us/portal/server.pt/community/standards_aligned_system/4228>

Pennsylvania Department of Education. 2009. *Standards Aligned System.* Retrieved from <http://www.portal.state.pa.us/portal/server.pt/community/standards_aligned_system/4228>